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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology

FROM:

Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

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SUBJECT:

Review of Analysis Group Role in FBIS

REFERENCE:

Advance Work Plan for Director, FBIS

OVERVIEW

1. This responds to your request for a report on the utility of the services and products of the FBIS Analysis Group (AG): In the Advance Work Plan you asked that the report include an evaluation of the utility and focus of the FBIS media analysis activity and its usefulness to consumers. You also directed that we identify to what extent Analysis Group's resources go to the production of a useful intelligence product as opposed to internal FBIS operational management objectives.

2. In accordance with this directive, we have reviewed prior studies of AG's role in FBIS, examined consumer responses on the utility of AG's products and services, and have taken another look at the functions of the Analysis Group within the integrated FBIS media collection structure. There is no clearly defined distinction between those Analysis Group's resources that are allocated to intelligence production and those allocated to internal FBIS operational objectives. This is because in practice the two functions are intertwined; one function cannot be performed without the other. To produce good media analysis requires careful and continuous monitoring of the source collection process; conversely, useful advice and guidance in source collection cannot be provided without the knowledge and insights derived from analysis production. Each individual analyst in the Analysis Group performs three functions in his area of expertise: analytic reporting, substantive collection guidance, and special services to FBIS consumers. During any given period, an analyst typically devotes 30-40 percent of his time directly to preparing specific items for publication. This time does not reflect the continuing process of reviewing and discussing material that has potential value for publication and that is also relevant to the guidance responsibility.

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3. The following are our principal conclusions:

- Analysis Group's products and services are regarded as valuable inputs into the Intelligence Community's analyses and research on communist affairs, according to consumer surveys, including the Inspector General's January 1980 report on FBIS.
- The value of AG's contribution is significantly enhanced by the fact that it is totally integrated into the overall FBIS effort and makes a major contribution to it. As resident substantive and media experts, AG analysts guide and monitor the FBIS collection effort worldwide and service special requirements levied on FBIS by Agency and other U.S. Government offices that could not be handled by other FBIS components.
- Without this resident expertise to guide and monitor its efforts, FBIS collection and reporting would suffer significantly, and the potential of FBIS monitoring to provide meaningful political insights and respond to Community needs would be seriously weakened.

BACKGROUND

1. The question of the utility and location of the Analysis Group in FBIS--an analytic component in what is essentially a collection office--has generated a number of studies over the years. A USIB Human Sources Committee survey in the fall of 1973, for example, concluded that AG's input to USIB intelligence producers is a "major one highly valued" by the Intelligence Community and that AG's analytical function could not be performed as effectively outside FBIS. The most exhaustive examination of AG's role was done in late 1974 by the DDI Management Staff, which concluded that the removal of the Analysis Group from FBIS was "neither desirable nor feasible" for the following reasons:

- The quality of the unique product and service of the Analysis Group would not thrive in an all-source environment.
- The independence of Analysis Group is the key to its ability to provide Agency and non-Agency consumers with this unique form of intelligence support.
- The removal of the Analysis Group would seriously impair FBIS' ability to guide and monitor collection and deprive the Community of a "highly valued" product.

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--Transfer of the group into either the Office of Political Research or the Office of Current Intelligence would not result in resource saving.

--Space consideration alone--the need for 5,200 square feet currently occupied by the Analysis Group--makes such a move impossible in the foreseeable future.

2. During the recent IG inspection of FBIS, the question of the location of the Analysis Group was again reviewed, and consumers were surveyed on the usefulness of AG products. The IG report singled out a comment in the DDI study that AG is "a case where bureaucratic untidiness makes for the most sensible use of resources and for the best intelligence production." "Five years later," the IG report said, "we have no reason to question this viewpoint."

#### AG'S METHODOLOGY AND FOCUS: ANALYTIC REPORTING ON COMMUNIST MEDIA

1. Although political analysts throughout the Community use the public media as one of many sources, AG is unique in its focus on the media and its comprehensive collection of and familiarity with materials drawn from them. The AG analyst engages in close scrutiny and comparison of themes and formulations to discern early signals that may point to potentially major changes in policy or relations (the Sino-Soviet conflict is a notable example). The underlying premise is that FBIS sources, particularly authoritative statements and commentary, register the behavior of a highly purposive, controlled, and sensitive instrument of a communist regime. It is AG's job to monitor that instrument--contained in the daily FBIS collection take--screen the wheat from the chaff, and interpret the meaning of significant material in a political context. Analysis Group has been applying this methodology for some three decades with highly successful results. A recent Senate Intelligence Committee staff report on intelligence on China observed that FBIS analysts have provided "some of the earliest and most acute alerts to changing China patterns."

2. AG's analytic reporting appears in the weekly Trends in Communist Media; studies and articles in greater depth are published in Analysis Reports or Special Memoranda. Major Government consumers also receive the Trends through the FBIS Wire as well as ad hoc Analysis Notes on significant Soviet, Chinese or other communist media comment on urgent topical developments. AG's analytic output is occasionally used by NFAC and other elements of the Government in finished intelligence items. An example of the latter is a paper written by INR for Dr. Brzezinski in February 1979 on Soviet media treatment of Iran, which was largely based on an item in the Trends.

AG'S FILES: COLLECTION AND RETRIEVAL OF POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS

Essential to the validity of AG's methodology is the integrity of its files of source materials, maintained by AG's Research Branch. These materials include comprehensive files of public statements over three decades by top communist leaders, as well as official government and party statements, diplomatic notes and major press articles. Extracts of communist materials on critical themes and issues are computerized in Project PASKEY--a program that permits retrieval by thematic category and keyword of Soviet, Chinese, and North Korean material. In its role as author of the mandatory processing requirements and monitor of the collection effort, AG insures the completeness and consistency of the basic community research file of communist political materials. And as attested to by the recent IG report, Research Branch's services are in demand not only by AG analysts but by intelligence components throughout the Community.

AG'S INTEGRATED ROLE IN FBIS

1. Collection Guidance: This function takes the form of day-to-day monitoring of the daily FBIS collection take of 280,000 words from 14 field bureaus and two units. This daily review, which insures relevance to requirements and substantive control of quality, simultaneously serves both the operational and the analytical functions. In addition to levying mandatory texting requirements, AG maintains a continuous exchange of messages with the field eliciting information on specific points that arise in the course of the analyst's review of the FBIS field take. While FBIS editors regularly rotate among various field bureaus and assignments in headquarters, AG is a relatively stable component in which the same analyst covers a particular area or subject for years at a time. The editors are generalists, while the analyst is a specialist keenly aware of patterns of media behavior as well as of substance. Key tools which assist the analyst in making decisions on processing are daily lists, supplied by the field, of communist radio, television, and press agency items which have been monitored but not always filed.

2. Publications Guidance: The analyst as a substantive expert also is in daily contact with FBIS Headquarters editors and other FBIS offices on questions regarding translation, coverage, and processing. In order to safeguard the Community against publication omissions, the AG analyst is responsible for reviewing the "discards" from the Daily Report books (i.e., those field bureau items not published in the DR) and making a decision as to whether the material should be published in the Daily Report or forwarded to JPRS for publication. AG analysts also participate in working groups, task forces, and joint projects within FBIS components on such questions as field bureau performance, coverage, requirements, and quality control of FBIS publications.

3. **Special Consumer Services:** As FBIS' substantive and media specialists--with an intimate knowledge of coverage arrangements and media behavior patterns--AG analysts are called upon to perform various services for major U.S. Government agencies not handled elsewhere in FBIS. These special services include daily responses to inquiries and special requirements from Agency components, the National Security Council Staff, the Department of State, ICA, and other offices concerned with foreign affairs. Requests relate to radio, television, and press material (including content, volume, and audience targeting) of immediate relevance to policymakers. AG also services U.S. negotiators at major international conferences such as MBFR and SALT. Analysis Group also prepares world reaction reports at the request of high-level consumers (including the White House) on significant developments, such as foreign reaction to the Vienna summit conference. (attachment A)

4. **AG Analyst's Crisis Role:** AG's integrated role in FBIS' total structure is dramatically heightened during crisis situations far beyond the normal daily routine of coordination on operational and substance matters. Since the onset of the hostages crisis in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, for example, AG's senior analyst on the Middle East has played a pivotal role in directing the FBIS effort, in responding to inquiries and special requirements levied on FBIS, and in reporting and interpreting for the Community Soviet media treatment of the crises. The following are examples of this effort:

- Provided initial guidelines and continued supervision of daily roundups of Soviet media treatment of Iran prepared by field bureaus for the DDCI;
- Requested a study of Tehran radio's Arabic-language programs by Jordan Bureau for the State Department's Policy Planning Staff and an update of the study for NFAC;
- Provided an overview of content of Soviet broadcasts to the Middle East and South Asia as part of a memorandum requested by the DCI;
- Levied requirements for lateral field filing of selected Moscow materials to the Embassy Kabul and responded to frequent requests by State's Afghan Desk for information on Soviet media behavior and for assistance to the Embassy.



USEFULNESS TO CONSUMERS

AG consumers have repeatedly confirmed throughout the years that the Group's products and services are valued highly and provide a valuable input into the Intelligence Community's analysis of communist affairs. One of the most noteworthy assessments of Analysis Group's contribution was contained in a Senate Committee on Intelligence report on China in April 1978, which commented that " . . . in terms of the cost effectiveness of intelligence on China the taxpayer probably gets the most for his money out of . . . FBIS reports and analyses . . . ." The most recent survey of consumers of AG's products was contained in the Inspector General's January 1980 report on FBIS. Based on interviews in the Intelligence Community and a survey conducted by the Collection Tasking Staff (CTS), the IG report concluded that "the production of the Analysis Group is well received by a select but important group in Washington and abroad. AG analysts perform various ad hoc services for the U.S. Government not handled elsewhere in FBIS. The Research Branch is efficient and well led, and its services are in demand." A sampling of the consumer comment in the IG report included:

--In Bangkok, the Embassy political section noted that the Trends was "very good," [redacted] commented that the Trends is the "best analysis they get and is better than that from OPA or elsewhere."

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--The political officer in Seoul described the analytical pieces from FBIS as "extremely useful" and "top notch."

[redacted] the Trends items on North Korea were "provocative" and generated a dialogue between Washington and the U.S. Mission in Seoul which was "healthy." The NFAC representative in Seoul noted that the Analysis Group products were a major source of information for him.

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--One of the political officers in the Hong Kong Consulate General noted that the Trends were superior to the analyses on China produced locally by various official and private analytical services. The NFAC representative in Hong Kong stated that the FBIS product, including the Trends, was "indispensable."

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--In the Washington area, we found that the analysts covering the USSR, East Europe, China, and the rest of Asia in NFAC's Office of Political Analysis considered the Trends to be "essential," "important," or "useful for background."

--In like manner, National Intelligence Officers involved in Soviet, East European, and Chinese affairs were pleased with the Trends.

--In the Department of State (INR as well as the policy desks), those working on the Soviet Union, East Europe, and Asia found that the Trends made a real contribution; the work done on North Korea was singled out for praise.

--In the Washington area, the CTS survey indicated that Trends was well received by U.S. military elements working on Soviet, East European, and Asian developments.

The attached documents present more detailed information on AG special services to Agency and other U.S. Government offices and comment from OPA on AG's analytic output.

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Attachments:

- A. Special Media Analysis  
Services Provided by AG
- B. AG Services to  
DDO/Covert Action  
Staff (1978 and 1979)

FBIS/AG, [redacted] 29Feb80)

STAT

Distribution:

- Orig - DDS&T
- 1 - D/FBIS
- 1 - [redacted]
- 1 - FBIS Exec. Reg.

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TAB A

SPECIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS SERVICES

PROVIDED BY AG

--From fall 1978 through 1979 provided guidance and analysis to Intelligence Community on Moscow treatment of Iran, including content of Moscow Persian-language broadcasts and Baku-based National Voice of Iran. In December 1978 published Special Memorandum on National Voice of Iran. Memo sent to NSC, praised by Brzezinski, shown to President.

--At Brzezinski request published Special Memorandum analyzing content of Turkish-language clandestine radios.

--At White House request prepared a paper on Soviet media treatment of new Afghan regime.

--For White House prepared analysis of Soviet reaction to proposed boycott of Olympics.

--Trends articles provided to DCI on Pyongyang treatment of U.S.-ROK proposal for tripartite talks.

--For DCI prepared world reaction report on Indochinese refugee crisis.

--For White House Office of Science and Technology Policy provided foreign media reaction report on Skylab reentry.

--Contributed to DCI Presidential briefing on Moscow attitude toward U.S.

--Recent NITO study on Soviet succession reported that AG follows the succession problem as a topic of highest importance. NITO noted that AG analyzes Soviet media output against the historic record and that open sources will likely provide important indications of leadership maneuvering.

--At White House request provided Trends articles on SALT and computer printout of Soviet elite statements on SALT for preparation of briefing folders for White House staff members.

--At DCI request for meeting with President, sparked by DCI conversation with D/NFAC Bowie, provided memo on Moscow's propaganda on bilateral relations with U.S. and Moscow's depiction of U.S. role in various areas of the world.



---Providing to OER periodic assessments of Soviet reaction to U.S. sanctions against USSR in wake of Afghanistan.

--Provided State computerized printout of Chinese elite statements linking the U.S.-Taiwan defense treaty with Sino-U.S. normalization, as well as Trends analysis, for State use in court suit challenging abrogation of treaty.

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